Our Boys and Girls

DAVY'S STRONG FOUNDATION.

Davy stood and watched the workmen as they laid the foundation for the new house next door. He had never before seen a pile-driver, and the great hammer driving the piles was very wonderful and new to Davy.

Day after day found him watching at the fence that divided their garden from the next lot.

After a while the big pile-driver was moved away, and the workmen began using the lumber that lay waiting to build the house. Davy missed watching the huge hammer work, but he soon grew very much interested in the new house.

The workmen came to know and like Davy, too, and because he was polite and never meddled with anything they saved the odds and ends of lumber and gave them to him to play with in the garden.

"Davy, dear," called his mother one bright morning, "don't you think that you have learned enough by watching the workmen next door to be a carpenter yourself and build a doll house for your little sister?"

Davy's face was as bright as the day as he ran into the house for the hammer.

"Come on, Agnes," he called, "and show me where you want it put."

Little Agnes followed him into the garden and chose her lot.

"I'll have to drive piles there first to make it safe," Davy said, as he began hammering things into the ground.

Agnes started to cry, and mother came to the window to see what the trouble was.

"She wants to see the house go right up, mother," called Davy, "but I've got to make the foundation strong before I begin to build."

"You wouldn't like your house to fall when the first hard wind blows, would you, dear?" asked her mother, joining the children in the garden.

And then, while Davy laid his foundation, she explained to her little daughter something of what Davy had learned all the days he had watched the pile-driver.

Davy took a whole week to build the house, and that seemed a long time to his little sister; but he didn't slight one thing about it, and so when it was finished it was quite a nice little house.

Several of the workmen paused to watch Davy, as they passed the garden fence, and to praise his good work.

One sunshiny morning, when the house was quite complete, Davy and his mother sat under one of the garden trees and watched Agnes move her things in.

"I am glad you are so careful in your building," began his mother. "Did you ever think that people are like houses, my child?"

Davy's face grew puzzled, and he listened eagerly as she continued:

"You see, it's like this. Even little folks can begin by taking the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour and laying a good foundation for their lives, and as they grow older and larger they must not neglect any part of their house, but put all good works into the building."

Davy smiled as her meaning came to him.

"I never thought before of people being like houses!" he exclaimed.

"There are poor cramped houses of weak material in the world, and there are also strong, beautiful houses carefully built," his mother replied softly. "Which kind are you going to try and make your life like, Davy?"

"I mean to try and be like the strong one, mother!"

"Then," she whispered softly, "your building shall not fall, but will remain strong and good throughout all the stormy days of life."—Am. Messenger.

MUGGINS—THE DOG WITH A MOTOR CAR

Perhaps your dog has a fancy kennel, but I doubt if he has a real automobile all his own. "Muggins," a dog owned by a Los Angeles man, is probably the only dog in the world that owns a real auto. His master made an automobile out of odds and ends of metal; molded the tires out of real rubber; put head lights, tail lights, and a search light on it, which light up from a battery on the large car; made a motor and engine of clock springs and wheels, which works like a big engine; attached a bumper, a double-piece windshield, and put a glass plate in the hood, through which you can see the tiny engine work. The car has a fan and real cylinders, foot brake, gear shifts, and a steering wheel.

Muggins has a sweater coat for chilly weather and a raincoat with goggles of isinglass for wet weather. When his master presses the button to start the little motor, Muggins jumps into his seat, and sits at attention with his front feet up, begging for a ride. When his master starts the car, Muggins sits down ready for a speed run. He enjoys riding in his private car, for recently he rode eighty miles, and never whimpered or even tried to get out of his seat, until they called him. He seems perfectly contented to ride all day.

The car is about two and a half feet long, and just narrow enough to keep the dog from falling out. It is quite a novelty in the way of a mechanical piece of work, for it is more than a toy.—Selected.

CRICKET'S SUNBEAM.

Cricket's mamma was sick. At this thought the child often grew grave in the midst of her play, and asked when mamma would be better.

Before Mrs. Flitner was well enough to go about freely again, there came a week of sharp east winds and rain. She felt that every day indoors was a loss to her, and it was, at least, a loss of cheerfulness. She complained, perhaps, too bitterly, of not having been able to drive out for so long a time, never guessing how her little child suffered in sympathy.

"If it rains to-morrow," she cried, at last, to a friend, "I certainly shall divide myself and go to buffets."

She was lying upon the lounge at twilight, when she said this, while Cricket sat on a footstool, nestling at her side, with hand in hers. How could the little five-year-old know that this was only a quotation from Shakespeare? She heard the impatient tones, but she could only understand that the words meant something bad for her sick mamma.

At bedtime the nurse found her leaning out of an open window, with the rain beating against her little face. When spoken to, she held up her hand as a signal for silence, and then, after a moment, allowed the window to be closed. But the nurse could not learn why she was so quiet.

The next morning she burst into Mrs. Flitner's room.

"Mamma, mamma, you needn't 'go to buffins'; you can go to ride. See what a nice day I've brought you."

"I need not go where, Cricket? And you have brought me a nice day? Is it you, my little one?"

"Yes, mamma, it is me. Because last night I asked God to send me a sunbeam to-day; and the wind took my voice 'way up. And there's sunbeams all over the sky; but that's for me and you, mamma," and she pointed to a flood of light pouring in between the window hangings.

Dear little Cricket, your love and faith sent the sunbeams to your mother's heart, if not to her eyes. And it is true that God at some time sends sunbeams to us all. If we were only childlike enough to know they were meant for us.—Frances C. Sparhawk, in The Companion.

TALKING CANARIES.

In the year 1858 Mr. Leigh Sotheby, in a letter to Doctor Gray, of the British Museum, described a remarkable talking canary. Its parents had reared many young ones, but three years before they had hatched only one out of four eggs and neglected the chick, commencing at once the rebuilding of a nest on the top of it.

Upon this discovery the unfledged and forsaken bird, all but dead, was taken away and placed in a flannel by the fire. After much attention it was restored, and was then brought up by hand.

Treated in this way, and separated from all other birds, it became familiarized only with those who fed it, consequently its first singing notes were of a character totally different from those usual with the canary.

From the beginning its mistress had been in the habit of talking to it, and when it was about three months old it astonished her by repeating some of her endearing terms, such as "kissie, kissie," with its significant sounds.

From time to time it added to its vocabulary, until for hours together, except during the molting season, it astonished listeners by ringing the changes according to its own fancy, and as plainly as any human voice could articulate them, on the several words: "Dear sweet Zitchie," its name—"kiss Minnie," "kiss me, then, dear Minnie," "sweet, pretty, little Zitchie," "kissie, kissie, kissie, dear Zitchie," "Zitchie, wee, gee, gee, gee, Zitchie, Zitchie." At other times it imitated the whistle with which its master called the dog.

In 1839 a canary capable of distinct articulation was exhibited in Regent street. The following were some of its sentences: "Sweet, pretty dear," "sweet, pretty dear Dicky," "Mary," "sweet, pretty little Dicky, dear," and often in the course of the day, "sweet, pretty queen."

The bird also imitated the jarring of a wire and the ringing of a bell. It was three years old at the time, and had been reared by a lady who never allowed it to be in the company of other birds.

SINGING.

Of speckled eggs the birdie sings
And nests among the trees;
The sailor sings of ropes and things
In ships upon the seas.

The children sing in far Japan,
The children sing in Spain;
The organ with the organ man
Is singing in the rain.

—Robert Louis Stevenson.